



Commandant's NOTE

MAJOR GENERAL JERRY A. WHITE Chief of Infantry

BOLD SHIFT: Strength in Reserve

In my previous notes in *INFANTRY*, I have talked about training and materiel improvement initiatives designed to enhance the mobility, lethality, and survivability of early deploying light forces. Such units are essential if we are to establish a credible military presence early enough to deter or counter an aggressor.

One salient lesson of the Gulf War is that putting forces on the ground early demonstrates national resolve, causes the aggressor to hesitate, and provides time for the insertion of heavy mechanized follow-on units to conduct effective ground operations against the enemy's main strength.

This issue of *INFANTRY* contains two articles that relate to such heavy mechanized forces. One is a company commander's account of his preparations for leading his unit in the attack during *DESERT STORM*; the other discusses the organization of combat service support assets in a heavy combined arms task force.

In this issue, I want to bring you up to date on a unique training program for Reserve Component units and tell you what the United States Army Infantry School is doing to improve the training of the mechanized force.

Since August 1991, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command has been working on a program designed to improve and sustain the training and the overall readiness of both Reserve Component (RC) and Active Army units. This program is aptly named **BOLD SHIFT**—because of the innovative approach it entails and because of the shift in emphasis that now offers RC units better training opportunities.

Recent changes throughout the world have redefined the strategic climate in which we live. The threat posed by the former Soviet Union and its surrogates has been largely supplanted by a number of potential

aggressors that have smaller, yet equally sophisticated, armed forces which threaten the stability of our allies and hence that of the world economy. Since we no longer can afford to pre-position units close to all potential trouble spots, our force of the next century will have to be highly mobile, decisively lethal, and readily sustainable, while at the same time significantly smaller than in the past.

The importance of realizing the full potential of our force is greater than ever, and it is the leadership of that force that will make the difference when we once again have to commit U.S. soldiers in support of our national interests. **BOLD SHIFT** specifically addresses leadership training as one of its milestones in strengthening the total force.

DESERT STORM taught us that it is unlikely that we will again have the luxury of a long build-up period before committing the force against an aggressor. Another goal of **BOLD SHIFT**, therefore, is to reduce the number of training days a reserve component unit will require before being deployed. Training leaders to standard is demanding and requires a great deal of time and resources; it is therefore beyond the capabilities of many RC units, given the limited training time and often austere training resources available to them. But we can conduct this training at Fort Benning, where the subject matter expertise, the facilities, and an environment free of distractions are all readily available.

During Fiscal Year 1992, the Infantry Center has conducted two 14-day training rotations for selected mechanized RC units, and three more such rotations are planned for FY 1993. Beginning in July, the Infantry School's Ranger Training Brigade and the 29th Infantry Regiment hosted two pilot **BOLD SHIFT** rotations, training Army National Guard leaders from

Texas, Oregon, Alabama, South Carolina, and Washington.

Company E, 4th Ranger Training Battalion, presented the Infantry Leader Course (ILC), which trained unit leaders on current doctrinal standards for individual tasks, taught them how to conduct training to standard at their home stations, and provided them an environment that promoted cohesion. The instructors tailored the ILC to address specific training requirements of the designated RC units.

The Ranger company—working closely with Company C and the Bradley Instructor Company, 1st Battalion, 29th Infantry—conducted training on both mounted and dismounted tasks. Drawing heavily upon the experiences of mechanized units in DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM, the two units developed a field training location reminiscent of the tactical assembly areas occupied by units deployed to the Arabian Gulf during the winter of 1991-1992.

The units in training bivouacked at Eelbeck Range, which is approximately 20 road miles from the Main Post cantonment area. This site was selected because it allowed the units maximum training time on the best terrain available, reduced the time required for moving to and from billets, and shielded them from distractions.

Each day of training builds on the previous day's instruction, culminating in a student-led situational training exercise (STX) at the end of each phase. Collective tasks of particular relevance to the mechanized infantry community include occupation of an assembly area, vehicle maintenance operations, planning and conduct of a tactical road march, tactical mounted/dismounted movement, overwatch/support by fire, assault, consolidation/reorganization on the objective, and mount/dismount, as well as all squad and platoon mounted and dismounted battle drills.

The BOLD SHIFT training methodology provides a unique opportunity for RC soldiers to train at a facility where they have access to the equipment and the subject matter expertise they need, and also to a training area where they can conduct exercises to evaluate and reinforce the skills they are learning.

While BOLD SHIFT represents an innovative approach to the training of RC units, it is based on training principles whose validity has long been established. One of those training principles is focusing training on the unit mission essential task list (METL). Additionally, the soundness of the train-the-trainer approach provides the basis for much of today's leadership instruction. Likewise, the after-action review process is an integral part of field training exercises, and indeed any training event in which immediate feedback and discussion are necessary either to correct or to reinforce a student's performance. Finally, the knowledge and skills imparted to those participating in BOLD SHIFT are taught to tasks, conditions, and standards that have been meticulously developed to meet specific needs of the students, their units, and the Army as a whole.

BOLD SHIFT is certainly an idea whose time has come. If we are to move ahead into the 21st Century and meet the diverse military challenges of a changing world, the combat readiness of our total force—Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and Active Army—is absolutely essential. Our Nation can best offer a credible deterrence to aggression if we demonstrate the ability to project a mix of light and mechanized forces against any potential aggressor. We proved that we could do this when Iraq invaded and seized territories belonging to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Through the implementation of such programs as BOLD SHIFT, we will remain ready to fight and win on the battlefields of the future, wherever they may be.

